

(501)

SELECTIONS
FROM THE
VERNACULAR NEWSPAPERS

PUBLISHED IN THE

PUNJAB, NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES, OUDH, AND
CENTRAL PROVINCES,

Received up to 29th February, 1872.

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**POLITICAL (DOMESTIC).**

THE *Rohilkhund Literary Society's Journal* for the month of November publishes an essay on early marriages among the natives of India, written by a teacher of the school at Pindi Bhutteen (Punjab). After premising that marriage is a bounden duty in every religion, the writer goes on to state at what period of life is it customary among the people to celebrate it. He divides the inhabitants into two groups, *viz.*, (1) rustic, and (2) urban, and the latter again into the two classes of patricians and plebeians; and then describes the customs obtaining among each in regard to nuptials.

*Firstly*,—Among people of the first kind it is usual not to marry until puberty. But this practice is sometimes carried to an extreme. The inhabitants of some forest tracts do not marry their daughters until they have passed the meridian of life, and the bloom and vigour of youth have begun to give place to the infirmities of age. The result is that the women are led astray, cases of which are often lodged in courts situated near forests.

*Secondly*.—The people of the second class, as a rule, marry their children while they are too young; nay, the higher or the patrician class among them are in the habit of betrothing their sons and daughters as soon as they have begun to speak a little, and uniting them in wedlock soon after. They feel it a shame to suffer their children to remain unmarried till they have arrived at maturity, and all the more so as in case of their doing so they are sure to expose themselves to public scandal.



The origin of the practice is next traced. It is stated to date from the time of Raja Ram Chandra, who married Sita, the daughter of Raja Janak, when he was only ten years old; while his brothers, who were married at the same time, were still younger in age.

Having thus shown how the custom of early marriage has gained ground in the country, the writer proceeds to discuss its propriety and the results following from it. He begins by stating that, though death should be feared at all times and by persons of all ages, children are more likely to die than others on account of being subject to peculiar diseases, such as small-pox and the like, until the age of twelve. This fact is in itself a strong argument against the propriety of marrying children before they have turned of a proper age. Apart from this consideration, it is enjoined in the *Shastras* that children should be perfectly educated before being united in marriage.

Unfortunately, however, neither reason nor religion is attended to, and foolish custom is allowed to predominate, the effects of which are most injurious and detrimental. These may be summed up as follows:—

(a) The intellectual faculties of children grow weak and are prevented from being fully developed, to which it is owing that, though naturally superior to Europeans in mental endowments and parts when young, natives are surpassed more and more by the latter in wisdom and ingenuity as they grow up in years.

(b) Discord generally prevails between the husband and the wife in most families, the result of which is that the former sometimes kills the latter, or is himself poisoned by her. Also, in some cases the wife elopes with her paramour, or sets up as a prostitute.

(c) Natives soon grow weak in constitution and lose the vigour of their limbs and the activity of their senses, and have few children born to them as compared with Europeans.



These and the like disadvantages are all results of early marriages, or marriages between men and women who are by no means a fit match for one another. Very often a grown up maiden is united in marriage with a young lad, or a girl of tender age with a decrepit octogenarian for the sake of money. How far such a union can be prosperous, and what prospect there is of such husbands and wives loving each other, may well be imagined.

The writer calls upon his countrymen to adopt measures for reforming the abuse. This could easily be done by reviving the old custom, under which princesses and daughters of noblemen chose their husbands at a public meeting, and no man was considered worthy of the hand of a lady unless he possessed superior skill in some art or profession, and had displayed it in some conspicuous way. In other words, marriages should be made to depend on the mutual consent of the parties, instead of being left to the option of the parents, and worth, rather than wealth, should be the guiding principle in the choice.

The *Aina-t-Aib-Numá-i-Hind* of the 10th February states, on the authority of the *Umdat-ul-Akhbár*, that on the night of the 29th November a fire broke out at Allahabad in a house situated towards the north of the Artillery Hospital, which burnt a lad to death, and so dreadfully scorched two women and a child that there are scarcely hopes of their surviving. Through the exertions of the people of the place the fire was soon extinguished, so that no more than two or three houses were burnt. The police failed to come in to help at the time, and were not even aware of the incident till next morning, which is accounted for by the fact that this class of Government *employés* are often absent from what should be the scene of their duties. The editor condemns this conduct of policemen, and thinks that strict injunctions should be issued to them by the police authorities to be ever prompt in rendering aid on such occasions.



The *Puttiala Akhbár* of the 12th February, while praising the Maharaja of Jeypore for his able administration and the zeal and activity with which the municipality of the state is conducting its functions and exerting itself in carrying out conservancy measures under his auspices, is somewhat surprised at the order which, according to the *Koh-i-Núr*, has recently been passed, that such of the *employés* of the State as are posted in *nizamuts* situated farther than twenty *kos* from the city of Jeypore should continue drawing their salary from those *nizamuts* as heretofore, the rest who hold appointments in places within that distance being required to attend the capital in order to get their pay. Unless there be some peculiar weighty reasons to the contrary, the editor would ask the Maharaja to amend the order, seeing that while it will in no way be useful to the State, it will prove to be a source of great trouble to public servants, and interfere with a proper discharge of the duties entrusted to them.

*Puttiala Akhbar,*  
12 Feb. 72 [The same paper reviews the proposal of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal relative to the abolition of the law according to which cases of Her Majesty's British-born subjects in India can only be tried by the High Court, the subordinate courts having no right to hear or decide them, which proposal has been seconded by the *Englishman*, the *Indian Daily News*, and the *Urdú Guide*. The *Puttiala Akhbár* is at one with its contemporaries in thinking the law to be unjust, and makes the following observations on the subject:—

The law supposes European subjects to be entitled to greater esteem and honour than Hindoostanee ones, and implies that their cases deserve being tried with greater precaution and deliberation than those of their Native brethren, which is the same as saying that Government considers natives as mean and trivial, and allows national prejudice and partiality to weigh with it. This is strictly opposed not only to the principles of justice, but also to the sense of Her Majesty's proclamation in which it is openly professed that all classes of Her Indian subjects, irrespective of all distinction of colour



or creed, should enjoy the same privileges. Perhaps a defence for this implied breach of a deliberate promise may be found in the fact that in the early days of the British rule in India, when the relation between the English Government and the people was rather that of a conquering and a conquered race than that of sovereign and subjects, the preference in question could not be illegal. Assuming this argument to be well put, it would yet follow that, now that the state of things is altered, and a firm relation has grown between the British Government and the natives of India, and the former has been pleased openly to promise privileges which are justly due to the latter in virtue of their right as subjects by means of an imperial proclamation, the law in debate, the continuance of which supposes a violation of this promise, should be cancelled.

Apart from this consideration, it is at variance with the rules of a just Government such as the English that a partial law such as the one under discussion should be allowed to exist. It is reasons such as these that have weighed with the Hon'ble Mr. Campbell, who is a wise and just officer and has vast experience in Indian affairs, in suggesting the cancelment of the regulation.

Under these circumstances, the writer invites the attention of the Indian Legislative Council to the necessity of repealing the law. In case an absolute reversal thereof should appear to it to be undesirable, it should at least be modified so far as to extend to the *élite* among the natives the privilege of having their cases tried only by the High Court, which is now enjoyed exclusively by Europeans, in order that the partial distinction now existing between the two peoples may be removed to some extent. It could not be reasonable that among a population of nineteen crores of natives, there should not be even one or two thousand persons, at least, who might be assumed to be equal in respectability to the common people of Europe.]

An Etah correspondent of the *Mufid-i-Am* of the 15th February reports the plundering at 2 A.M. of a bullock-train



cart near Mouzah Ohhumara on the Mynpoory Road. For a while the robbers did not dare approach the cart through fear of the large number of passengers in it, and only frightened them from a distance; but when they found the latter show signs of cowardice and alarm, they boldly rushed into the conveyance, stripped all in it of their very clothes, and made off with all the goods after tying them up in bundles. The police are making inquiries, but no trace of the robbers has till now been found.

The *Akhbár-i-Alam* of the same date learns from the *Koh-i-Núr* that recently, on the arrival of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab at Kuppoothalla, a salute of nineteen guns was fired from the Royal Fort both after the completion of the ceremony of presenting arms by the Maharajah's army, arranged on both sides of the road which was to lead His Honor to the capital, and at the time of his paying a return visit to the Maharajah. The editor of the *Akhbár-i-Alam* fails to see why the salute offered was of nineteen guns, seeing that in the public papers relating to the salutes of guns to Government officers one of fifteen only is prescribed for Lieutenant-Governors. It may be that the Maharajah departed from this rule by way of compliment to the Lieutenant-Governor, in which case the number of guns might as well have been increased to twenty-one, the highest number fixed for rulers of States and Governors-General; or, perhaps, that the Maharajah as well as his officers, notwithstanding the long train of titles affixed to their names, should not be aware of the rule.

A similar objection is raised against the statement made in the *Oudh Akhbár* of the 9th February, that at the time the Maharana of Oodeypore entered Ajmere a salute of nineteen guns was fired. In the code by Mr. Aitchison, Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, containing the treaties entered into between the English Government and the Native Chiefs and Princes, as well as other public docu-



ments, the number of guns fixed for the Maharana's salute in the English territory is set down as seventeen, and consequently the *Akhbār-i-Alam* is at a loss to make out how the Maharana could have received a salute of nineteen guns.

The same paper strongly condemns the high-handed policy adopted by Mr. Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Loodhiana, in causing a large number of the Kukas concerned in the late disturbances at Malair Kotla to be blown away from guns. "Undoubtedly," says the editor, "it was highly improper and unjustifiable in Mr. Cowan to have caused so many men to be blown away from guns all of a sudden, and without making full inquiries, and this for the following reasons:—Firstly, —the number of persons killed by all the Kukas was less than the number of the latter blown away; secondly, if as is alleged, it was in order to give warning and excite awe that such a course was adopted, surely there were various kinds of punishments, more painful, and at the same time ignominious and disgraceful, which could have been inflicted with advantage without subjecting the offenders to a death of the kind. For instance, their ears and noses might have been cut off, and they should then have been doomed to fourteen years' rigorous imprisonment, attended with some special corporal punishment, such as that of perpetual flogging, a chastisement which would have been long remembered by the Kukas and proved to be a decisive warning to others.

The *Benares Akhbār* of the same date, in its column of local news, again draws attention to the mismanagement of the municipality of the city. Roads frequented by Europeans are well looked after and watered at the cost of the natives, on whom the burden of the municipal taxes entirely falls; while lanes inhabited by the latter are allowed to remain full of filth, to the great inconvenience of the people.

The same paper says that bribery is another well-known evil which is allowed to be practised in open day. To draw such a high salary as Rs. 2,500 a month, and call upon poor



editors to prove the crime is excellent management indeed! (alluding to the behaviour of the Judge of Benares in having summoned the editor to Court to prove a case of bribery, noticed in detail in the foregoing number of the *Selections*). If the drawers of such handsome salaries were themselves to take the trouble of instituting inquiries, the abuse could easily be reformed.

To inflict light punishments on gamblers is another feature of mismanagement; and none the less so the oppressions practised by police constables on the merchants and shopkeepers attending fairs. Excellent management indeed!

The *Oudh Akhbár* of the 16th February, under the heading "Bangalore," notices the death of a European soldier at night near the Scotch Church from blows inflicted by some one. A notice has been fixed by the Superintendent of Police in each mohulla of the city promising a reward of Rs. 200 to any one who traces out the offender. The editor attributes the incident to the mismanagement of the police, but at the same time does not forget to call in question the vicious habit in which European soldiers are of wandering all night long in search of prostitutes, which is the cause of their being often subjected to an unmerciful treatment at the hands of the bad characters of a city.

A correspondent of the *Urdú Akhbár* of the same date reviews the new rules for travelling expenses to Nynsee Tal laid down by the Government, North-Western Provinces. According to these all British-born clerks, and all native officials drawing above Rs. 100, will be in the 1st class, and be entitled to get Rs. 132 as the expenses of their journey from Allahabad to Nynsee Tal; while all native clerks drawing less than Rs. 100 will be reckoned in the 2nd class, and will have a right to get Rs. 39 for the same purpose. In addition to these expenses, house-rent at Nynsee Tal will also be allowed to clerks of both classes.



The correspondent thinks it extremely unjust that, in the division of the clerks into two classes undue partiality should have been shown to British-born clerks, all of whom, irrespective of all consideration as to their pay, have been set down as coming under the 1st class. This partiality will appear still more unjustifiable when it is remembered that, though properly speaking the word *British-born* is applied exclusively to persons whose father and mother are both of European extraction, it is in the present instance understood to include all Christians whatever, whether European, or Eurasian, or Keranee. In this way, while a Christian receiving, say, Rs. 10 a month, will get Rs. 132 as the expenses of the journey, a native drawing Rs. 99 (*i.e.*, a single rupee less than Rs. 100, the minimum salary entitling native clerks to be reckoned in the 1st class) will only be entitled to get Rs. 39, which is highly unjust. One might say that since the reigning Government is Christian, it is only natural that it should show partiality to people of its own religion just as Musalman sovereigns used to do. This argument, sound as it might appear, is entirely at variance with the system pursued by Her Majesty's Government, according to which all classes of the people, independently of all considerations as to colour or creed, are entitled to the same privileges. Such being the case, it seems quite strange that the Government, North-Western Provinces, should have allowed these considerations to weigh with it. Is it because some *pádre sáhíb* has a share in the counsels of the North-Western Provinces Government that a rule such as the one in question, which the just Government of Her Majesty has all along held unlawful, has been tolerated in the North-Western Provinces? Had the minimum pay entitling natives to be ranked in the 1st class been even fixed at Rs. 50 instead of Rs. 100, it would have been some consolation to the latter.

The writer hopes the attention of the Government will be directed to the injustice pointed out.

With regard to the second kind of pecuniary assistance allowed by the rules, *viz.*, house-rent at Nynee Tal, the writer



would suggest the desirability of fixing a rate, in order that in procuring houses native clerks may be in a position to confine their wants to the rate allowed, and be thereby saved the loss and difficulty they are sure to incur if they are ignorant of such rate.

Urdu  
Akhbar,  
16 Feb. 72

[The same paper publishes a complaint which has appeared in several other Vernacular newspapers, viz., that in the nomination of persons to the settlement offices to be established in Bunnoo, Dera Ismael Khan, and other districts of the Punjab, under the sanction of the Local Government, the selection is to be made entirely from foreigners to the total exclusion of native officials, who, in the hope of getting appointments in the new offices had long worked hard in mastering settlement work. This circumstance has proved to be a source of great disappointment to the latter, whose labours will be entirely thrown away. Were it because of their incompetence or inexperience in the duties of the new appointments that preference had been given to candidates of other districts, there might have been some excuse for it. But since this is not the case, it can safely be asserted that their claims have been unjustly set aside. The writer refers in particular to the newly-created settlement office at Bunnoo, to which he has been informed the incumbents of the settlement office at Montgomery, where the settlement operations have closed, are to be transferred, an arrangement to which he strongly objects. He would fill up the new posts to be created in each district by the natives thereof as much as possible, the incumbents in question, whose services have come under reductions being provided for by posting one or two to each district, who will be of use in leading the new men in the conduct of the work; and takes this occasion to remark generally on the impropriety, not to say injustice, of filling up the vacancies occurring in different districts from time to time by candidates other than those who are natives of them, and have, consequently, better claims than foreigners.]



A correspondent of the same paper, writing from Moozuffernuggur, asserts that the census recently taken in that district was conducted in a most imperfect and irregular way. The writer speaks in particular of the pergunnah of Southern Jansuth, where the enumeration of the inhabitants of each village was entrusted to its putwaree, and the task of testing the accuracy of the returns was allotted to moonserims, one being posted to every ten villages. The former omitted whole mohullas from calculation, while the latter on the particular night fixed for testing the returns took their seat in the *chau-pal*, or the common resting-place in each village, and promiscuously set down the whole number of guests in it without caring to know to which particular houses they belonged. On the 27th January, the Extra Assistant Commissioner tested the returns, but even then there remained mistakes in the entries. The writer remarks that, if the census has been taken in a similar way in all districts it can be of no use.

The correspondent also notices a serious case of theft in the town of Bughera. The particulars were these. On the night of the 17th January, thieves got upon the roof of a mahajun's house of two stories by means of a bamboo forty cubits in length by fixing iron pegs into it, and carried away all his property, said to be valued at Rs. 30,000. Inquiries are being made.

A correspondent of the *Jalwa-i-Túr* of the same date, in giving particulars of the late Kuka outbreak at Mulier Kotla, censures the officers of that State for having failed to take any steps for its suppression. Though warned of the threatened danger by the Deputy Commissioner three days before, and possessing an army of two hundred men, together with six guns, the Nazim of the State could not keep the rebels, who were only seventy or eighty in number, at bay. Both on account of the unfitness thus shown by him for the control of the State, and his tyranny and oppression, which have reduced the people to straits, as well as his uncourteous and harsh manners, which are highly disagreeable to the nobles and the relatives of the late Nawab, the correspondent strongly recom-



mends that the Nazim should be superseded in the office by Sirdar Narayan Singh, Extra Assistant Commissioner, who has recently been placed by the Deputy Commissioner in charge of the military administration of the State, which he has conducted in an efficient manner.

The editor of the *Jalwa-i-Túr*, in reviewing the statement of his correspondent, takes this occasion again to comment on the impropriety of having set aside Gholam Mohammed Khan from the right of succession to the State and seated Ibrahim Ali Khan on the *musnud* (*vide* pp. 756-7 of the *Selections* for the week ending 30th December last). That a party of seventy or eighty persons should have dared to push their way into the State, enter into the royal residence, and commit bloodshed, could not but be due to the minority and inexperience of Ibrahim Ali Khan and the unfitness of his Nazim. Had Ghoham Mohammed Khan been the reigning chief, he would have undoubtedly shown himself more than equal to the exigency. Besides, during the short time Ibrahim Ali Khan has been on the *musnud* he has committed many unlawful acts, which are at once a proof of his negligent, wilful, and impetuous behaviour. Among these may be mentioned his killing of a *chamar* at Umballa by a shot from his gun and escaping from the charge by bribing the wife of the deceased (for particulars see pp. 2-3, of the *Selections* for the week ending 6th January last); his hurting a person of the Jat clan in the thigh by riding furiously, an incident which happened on the 30th January; his beating a zemindar till he was half dead, and then preventing him by means of expostulations from preferring a complaint against the wrong suffered; and several other instances of the kind. The editor hopes Government will take due notice of the affair, and set things to rights by placing Gholam Mohammed Khan, the rightful heir, on the *musnud*.

The *Lawrence Gazette* of the same date has an article on the different classes of mendicants who extort alms from mer-



chants and shopkeepers by employing threats, undergoing peculiar kinds of mortification, and in other obstinate and importunate ways. The most common varieties of these beggars are the following :—

(a) *Doree-walahs*, so called from their practice of spreading a *doree* or rope before shops, just like a measuring chain. The shops coming within the length of this rope they collect money from first, and then proceed to other shops repeating the same process. In case of any one of the shopkeepers refusing to comply with their demands, they form the rope into a noose and threaten to hang themselves, in order to excite his compassion and compel him to pay something.

(b) *Tusme-walas*, so named from their binding a strap of leather round their necks as if in the act of strangling themselves, and then lying on their back on the ground till they are paid, all the while fluttering their hands and feet like one labouring under the agonies of death.

(c) *Dunde-walas*, who, in case of a shopkeeper objecting to meet their demands, blacken their face and with small bats (*dundas*) in their hands which they strike together, curse and abuse him in the most scurrilous language, till a crowd of persons gathers round the shop to view the sight, thereby interrupting the shop-dealings, which, at last compels the owner to satisfy their request.

(d) *Uree-márs*, or mendicants who obstinately take their stand before shops, and will not leave them until their demands have been satisfied, even though they should have to stay from morn till eve.

(e) *Goorz-márs* and *chhooree-márs*, that is, faqirs who carry a knife or a club armed with spikes, with which they wound themselves in order to extort alms from the people. In case of any one happening to stand in their way, they sometimes inflict blows on him in a fit of rage. An instance of this recently happened near the old jail in the city of Meerut, where a head constable finding a *chhooree-már* obstinately extorting



four annas from a fisherman, and refusing even to accept fish of that value, prevented him from the unlawful practice, at which the faqir abused the head constable and then wounded him in the arm with his knife, so that the latter is still under treatment in the hospital.

The above details fully show what a nuisance mendicants of the different kinds are to the people at large, and consequently, of the imperative necessity of putting an effective check to their unlawful practices. It may be that some of the varieties above mentioned may have ceased to exist or grown less ferocious than formerly; but it is quite certain that several classes of them, especially the *gurz-márs* and *mund-chiras*, &c., still prevail, and are extremely troublesome. In the writer's opinion the best plan for putting a stop to the grievance will be by issuing a strict prohibition against the unlawful practices referred to, and giving full permission to the police to arrest without a warrant all mendicants who may be found with their instruments, and despatch them to court, which should either inflict a suitable punishment on them, or else release them on bail.

A correspondent of the same paper, writing from Roorkee, invites attention to the filthy state of the Jevalapore roads, which is said to be due to their being used by the people of the town for necessary purposes, there being no privies in their houses. As such a nuisance is extremely dangerous, and gives room to fear the probability of a pestilence breaking out at the place, the editor strongly impresses on Government the necessity of removing it, either by ordering the inhabitants to build privies in the houses, or by causing a public latrine to be built outside the city at the cost of the latter.

The *Koh-i-Núr* of the 17th February has a communicated article on the pernicious consequences of adultery. The writer thinks it a pity that, while steps have been taken by Government for checking crimes such as infanticide, slave-trade, &c., no measures have been adopted by it for putting a stop to adultery, that wicked and hateful crime which leads to the perpetration of various unlawful and unnatural offences. The Lock



Hospital Act did something at first towards checking the crime, by forcing many women of immoral conduct to marry, but has in the end proved ineffectual in producing the desired reform. The large number of concubines, so famous for carrying on their sinful practices in the dark, though alarmed for a time at the enforcement of the Act, have ultimately discovered an ingenious plan for evading it, which consists in their having taken up their abode in parts of cities inhabited by gentlemen, where, though they indulge in their criminal pursuit with greater freedom than they did before, they have no fear of being brought to book, and, even if their conduct be sometimes called in question, have the certainty of being exempted from the Act by professing to have set up as the wife of a particular individual, mentioning, of course, the name of some one of their lovers.

The writer calls upon the societies and *anjumans* established in different parts of the country, as well as the Government, to direct their attention to the abuse, and adopt measures for checking it.

The same paper publishes a communicated article on the abuses connected with the marriage contract obtaining among the people of the Punjab, so often noticed in the *Selections* (*vide* page 655 of the *Selections* for the week ending 11th November last) *viz.*, the custom of receiving money or other consideration in exchange for daughters before giving them in marriage, and what is worse, of betrothing them to several persons at the same time for the sake of obtaining money from each, which of course results in fierce contests and law-suits, the disappointed suitors trying each to win the disputed bride by force of arms or a recourse to law. The attention of the *Anjuman-i-Panjáb* has recently been drawn to the abuse, which is at once a fruitful source of crime and mischief and a disgrace to the native society. At a recent meeting of the *Anjuman* two lengthy essays were read, one by Moonshee Abdool Lateef, translator of the Chief Court, Punjab, who represented the Mohammedan community, and the other by



Moonshee Hursookh Rai, editor of the paper under review, who stood for the Hindoos. The question discussed was, whether the decisions of the law-suits to which the abuse gives rise, as well as other petty suits connected with the customs and usages of the country would not with advantage be entrusted to national *panchayats*, or rather petty national governments, to be formed in the different cities and villages out of the able and respectable inhabitants.

Moonshee Abdool Lateef, while he acknowledged the usefulness of such national governments in giving opinion in matters of the kind on account of their local experience and acquaintance with the customs and manners of the country, objected to the policy for the following reasons :—

(a) The difficulty of finding honest men to form the *panchayats*, who could pass impartial and unbiassed judgments.

(b) The little confidence people have, as a rule, in the decisions of national *panchayats*, chiefly on account of suspecting the integrity and soundness of opinion of the gentlemen composing them, to which it is owing that they always prefer having their suits decided by the public courts of law to referring them to people of their own nation for settlement.

(c) The decisions of a court are appealable, so that in case of injustice being done to them, litigants have a prospect of obtaining justice in the higher tribunals. Quite contrary is the case with the decisions of *panchayats*, against which there can be no appeal. Litigants must be content with the judgments passed, whether just or unjust.

On these grounds the translator expressed his aversion to the proposal. All he would recommend is that in all cases connected with the social customs and usages of the people, in which local experience is of value, the opinion of Doctors of Law and respectable and trustworthy native gentlemen should be consulted by the authorities, according as those cases have to do with religious or temporal matters. He would ask Government to pass a law to that effect.



Moonshee Hursookh Rai expressed quite a different opinion. He strongly supported the proposition, which, he remarked, would save the people all that trouble and loss which they have now to incur by lodging suits connected with their natural customs in courts, but would also be useful in lessening the work of the latter. As to the abuse in question, he further suggested the adoption of the following plans for putting a stop to it:—

(a) The practice of receiving money in return for daughters, should be prohibited by law, and in case of the hand of a girl being promised to several persons, that one of the competitors who is proved to have a prior claim should be decided to be the lawful husband, and the parents of such girl should be punished for a violation of their pledged faith, except in special cases where the breach of the marriage contract might seem to have been absolutely necessary, such as in case of the betrothed man having contracted some fatal disease, or some such cause.

(b) The registration of all marriage contracts should be made compulsory, just as in case of deeds and documents, the duty being intrusted to tehseeldars instead of being left to zillahdars, lumberdars, or pundits, as is now the practice in some parts of the Punjab, seeing that the least pretext is often sufficient to induce the latter to deviate from the path of justice.

The writer concludes with the remark that formerly all such disputes were settled by *panchayats*, and that the system might be revived with advantage.

The correspondent of the *Koh-i-Nūr* favours the views adopted by Moonshee Hursookh Rai, and refutes the arguments brought forward by the Mohammedan representative as being defective and unsound. He is strongly in favour of the constitution of petty national governments in the cities and villages of the Punjab as proposed, and foresees important advantages and good results from the measure. (For



a similar suggestion see pp. 617-19 of the *Selections* for the week ending 21st October last).

Another correspondent of the same paper likewise upholds the proposition, and seconds Moonshee Hursookh Rai's views as expressed above.

Another correspondent of the same paper writing from Pakputtun, asserts that in Mouzah Deekee Mahloo, in the Googeerah Tehseel, a well-known lumberdar is in the habit of procuring women from Manjah and other places by the agency of a party of men engaged for the purpose, keeping them concealed in his village, and then giving them in marriage to persons here and there, after persuading them to give some Rs. 100 or Rs. 200 for each. Up to date fifteen women have been thus kidnapped and disposed of by him. Only recently a poor Kirar fell into the trap. The lumberdar prevailed upon him to accept the hand of one of the ravished women for Rs. 200. The latter tried to get rid of her husband the very first night she went to him by mixing *dhutoora* with his food, and on his becoming insensible through the effects of the poison, ran away to the lumberdar, who sent her away somewhere. In the morning the Kirar lodged a complaint in court against the lumberdar, on which orders were issued to the police-station near which the village is situated to make inquiries, but no result followed, and the poor man's plaint was of course passed over unnoticed. The attention of the police at Googeerah is invited to the matter.

The same paper reports the prevalence of theft in the Peshawur District. The crime is chiefly committed by thieves of other places who take part with their fellows of the district.

It is added that many of the inhabitants of Peshawur had been in the habit of seducing others' women to elope with them, and then taking up their residence in foreign cities through fear of being brought to punishment under Section 98 of the Indian Penal Code. The Deputy Commissioner has now issued an order that all such offenders would, on the payment



of a fine of Rs. 20 each, be freely permitted to return to their homes with the ravished women, who would continue their sole property, their lawful husbands having no right to recover them, but simply to get the fine paid. This order has induced a large number of the absconders to resettle in Peshawur, together with their unlawful wives and children.

The *Koh-i-Núr* remarks that there must be some inner meaning in the order.

A Ghazeeabad correspondent of the same paper states that, in consequence of the railway-station at that town being one mile distant from the city, and there being no inn near the station, passengers have to suffer great trouble. The down-train leaves the station at 3 P. M., at which time it is not only very inconvenient but also dangerous for passengers to go from the city to the station, several cases of daring robberies having already happened on the road. The writer asks the police to be watchful, and at the same time points out the need of building an inn near the station, which will remove all difficulties now experienced by passengers.

Under the heading "Umritsur," the same paper notices the villainous conduct of a chowkeedar's son, who, with the aid of some persons of the bearer caste, plundered a mahajun's shop situated in Mouzah Muhlawallee, and, on being prevented by the owner, struck a heavy blow at his head with a club which made him insensible, and then made off with Rs. 500 worth of property. The chowkeedar was also an accomplice in the crime. A report of the theft was made to the police-station, when a constable was posted to make inquiries. But, unfortunately, the latter was won over by the chowkeedar, and the case was dropped. The writer hopes the attention of the police authorities will be directed to the matter.

It also mentions that a cooly who was hired by a woman to carry her luggage from the railway-station to the city made off with it. In order to avoid a recurrence of such crime, the



editor suggests that no coolies should be permitted by the police to serve railway-stations without furnishing security.

The *Oudh Akhbār* of the 20th February has an article on the dishonesty of Indian merchants and shopkeepers. It is remarked that very few of them ever speak the truth, and all are in the habit of exaggerating the price of the articles sold by them. In order to escape from being cheated by them, the editor suggests that in all cities all merchants and shopkeepers should be required to keep printed lists of the prices of all articles which have a fixed rate, with the signature of the president of the municipal committee attached to them, in order that customers may refer to them at the time of buying things, and be thereby prevented from being cheated.

*The public grief at the untimely death of Lord Mayo, late Viceroy and Governor-General of India.*

All Vernacular newspapers published in Upper India record with feelings of deep sorrow and sincere and heartfelt grief the melancholy news of the universally-lamented death of the late Viceroy and Governor-General at the hands of a cruel and barbarous assassin; and some of them adopted the European fashion of circulating 'extras' containing particulars of the melancholy event, *e. g.*, the *Benares Akhbār* (Benares), the *Agra Akhbār* (Agra), the *Samaya Vinod* (Nynee Tal), the *Pattiala Akhbār* (Pattiala), and one or two others—a circumstance all the more remarkable as being a rare, if not novel, feature in native journalism.

The grief expressed by the *Musīd-i-Am* of Agra and the *Dabdaba-i-Sikandari* of Rampore is most eloquent. The verses quoted by the former are highly poetical, but at the same time most touching and sublime, and convey in plaintive and pathetic strains the universal grief caused by the sad catastrophe. Not a single person throughout India but was grieved at the melancholy incident, nor a single house but was a scene of lamentation. The heavenly phenomena are described as each and all wearing the aspect of grief and showing signs of sorrow,



and the whole face of nature is beautifully depicted as being clothed in deep mourning and exhibiting one uninterrupted scene of grief and gloom. The breaking of the morn is compared to Aurora rending the collar of her garment in her grief at the catastrophe; the bare face of the sun is likened to Phœbus having thrown away his crown in an excess of sorrow; the pale face of the moon is represented as emblematical of grief, the halos round it as circles of mourners, and the white streaks of moon-light as currents of tears; the azure of the sky is interpreted to be a sign of its having put on a deep mourning, and so on. Altogether the verses are exquisite.

The *Dabdaba-i-Sikandari* publishes two plaintive dirges or rather elegies, one in Oordoo and the other in Persian, both of which—and especially the former—convey in the most plaintive ditties the grief universally felt at the untimely death of the Earl of Mayo. The political abilities and accomplishments of the deceased statesman; his equal and impartial dealing with both the Hindoo and Musalman subjects; his keeping up a system of friendly and familiar intercourse with the chiefs and princes of the native states; his kind, courteous, and amiable manners; his justice and equity; and his extensive popularity among the people of India, are dwelt upon in terse but forcible language: and the sincere grief caused by his death to Indian chiefs and princes with whom the late lamented Viceroy was a high favourite, and whose friendship and esteem he had won in a remarkable manner; and the proofs and attestations of loyalty mixed with the deepest sympathy evinced by them in causing a public mourning, with all its attendant formalities—such as the closing of public offices and bazaars, the stopping of the gongs or hour-bells, and the morning and evening guns, and a general prohibition throughout their territories against celebrating festivals or holding joyous parties, or making public exhibitions of joy, such as pyrotechnical displays, the sounding of kettledrums, and the like—to be observed in their states for several days in succession, are eloquently described.



The *Núr-ul-Absár* of the 15th February remarks that the death of the late Viceroy is a horrible incident, which, though its like might be met with in ancient history, is a strange one in the modern history of the Indian empire. What peculiarly strikes the writer in the circumstances attending the catastrophe is the way in which death makes room for itself and fate propels man to his doom. Never before Lord Mayo's time did any Governor-General think of undertaking the hazardous and troublesome task of visiting Burmah, and least so of directing his footsteps to the Andaman Penal Settlement, or Port Blair (called *kálá pání* by the natives), the abode of professed criminals who have been guilty of the foulest and darkest offences, and are well known to have stirred up riots and raised insurrections several times. That the Governor-General should have made up his mind to visit so dangerous a place, and, notwithstanding the greatest need for protection and safety in the island, should have more than once desired the officers there not to take any assiduous measures and precautions for his safety, is an indication that fate bent the Viceroy's mind on leaving Calcutta for Rangoon, and hurried him thence to Port Blair, and on his arrival there made him indifferent to the arrangements for his defence in order the more easily to execute its purpose. Thus fate throws the veil of negligence over mortal man and leads him on to his destined end !

The *Akhbár-i-Alam* of the same date remarks that though there have been many Governor-Generals of good administrative abilities before Lord Mayo, His Lordship's career was pre-eminently marked with assiduity, activity, and zeal in the discharge of public functions, and he shone conspicuous over his predecessors in his winning, easy, and courteous manners. A horrible incident such as the late Viceroy's assassination has been very rare in the history of the Indian empire, and it is one which Musalmans in particular ought to be much grieved at.



The *Benares Akhbār* of the same date, mentioning the particulars of the Viceroy's death, lays peculiar stress on Shere Ali's reply to the question put to him by Major Burne as to why he had killed the Viceroy, viz., that "it was by God's order." By so saying he simply meant that it was God's order in the Qoran for Musalmans to wage war (*jihād*) against Christians (Nasará or Nazarenes) and the infidels or Hindoos. Such proceeding on the part of Musalmans fully shows that it is high time for us to guard ourselves against them and repose very little confidence in them. Government should also take some effective steps in the same direction. Under the impression that they had had fewer chances of getting Government employment, and were dissatisfied for want of culture of Arabic learning, Government did much for them, and the very Viceroy who has been so barbarously put to death by one of their number was pleased to pass a resolution having for its object the spread and development of Mohamedan literature and science. This circumstance leaves no room to doubt that the wicked and ill-natured, even though one should do them the utmost good imaginable, cannot possibly be expected to requite it but with evil. Let us see what explanation Syud Ahmad Khan, C.S.I., who has taken upon himself to write much against Doctor Hunter's book on "Our Indian Musalmans," has to give to this. He ventured to prove the fallacy of the learned Doctor's statements by giving the world to understand that the latter was not well-versed in the religious books of the Musalmans. Us who are fully acquainted with the people and their history, he will find it a hard task to contradict. We can bring forward thousands of examples to show by what tricks and imposition they have murdered men in cold blood, and what wicked and abominable deeds they have committed. In the mutiny of 1857 it was they who raised disturbances. Lucknow, Delhi, and, in fact, all places where Musalmans predominated, took the foremost action in the rebellion, and it was there that it prevailed most. In Allahabad, the seat of the Government, North-Western Provinces, it was they who set up the standard



of Islam. If Hindoos at all took part with them in the affray, it was only as applauders of actors in a theatre. Nowhere in any of the religious books of the Hindoos is murder or bloodshed permitted, nor is even a mention made of it. The policy of Government that the Musalmans should be put in the right way and be made to refrain from wicked deeds by fair means and conciliatory measures is anything but wise. To test the national character of a people, and then deal with it accordingly, ought to be a fundamental principle with Government.

In its column of local news, the same paper records the grief felt by the people of Benares at the death of the late Governor-General. "The assassination of a Viceroy like the Earl of Mayo at the hands of a cruel wretch of the Mohamadan fraternity," remarks the editor, "is indeed very much to be lamented."

The *Oudh Akhbār* of the 16th February makes the following melancholy reflections on the late Viceroy's assassination:—

(a) The sudden death of an officer of lofty position like the Viceroy, and that, too, at a place where such an incident could be least expected to take place, and by the hand of an insignificant person, is stated to be an incident so lamentable as to surpass all speech.

(b) The fact of the prisoner having found time for the perpetration of such a high offence, and come by a bloody weapon and surprised the Viceroy unawares, is another sad reflection, which shows that fate is all-powerful.

(c) The conduct of the Viceroy's attendants, as well as the officers whose duty it was to make efficient arrangements for his protection in so dangerous a place, in having neglected to take precautionary measures for his safety is also a circumstance much to be regretted. The prisoner, it would seem, committed the horrible deed under the influence of that savage ferocity and malicious disposition which are well known to be



the characteristic of prisoners for life; and, accordingly, though it cannot be denied that the event was quite an accidental one, it must be assumed that the negligence pointed out was the principal cause of it.

(d) The mistaken policy of English officers in not keeping a suitable escort of guards and attendants with them is another reflection which is suggested by the dire catastrophe. As a matter of course, kings and officers must have some enemies, and, accordingly, no precautions taken for their safety and protection can be unwise. Native rulers have been extremely particular in this respect, and it has been an invariable rule with them to keep a valiant guard around them at all times, the result of which has been that no attempts such as the one in question are known to have ever been made on them. European officers, good-natured themselves, deem others to be such likewise, which is a mistake.

The writer hopes his suggestion will be entertained by the Home Government, and directions will be issued by it to the Government of India to the effect that all Government officers should at all times be suitably armed and escorted by a suite of life-guards and attendants.

In conclusion, the writer expresses a hope that suitable measures will be taken for perpetuating the memory of the deceased Viceroy, and remarks that Her Majesty would have done well to choose her future Viceroy from amongst the relatives of the late Earl of Mayo, which would have been some consolation to his family for the sad loss they have suffered. He would also ask the chiefs and nobles of India to present consolatory addresses to Lady Mayo, expressing their sympathy at her bereavement, which would tend to soothe her heart and lighten her grief for the heavy calamity which has befallen on her in her Indian residence.

The *Kárnámah* of the 19th February finds a connection between the recent appearance of the aurora borealis at different places and the assassination of the late Viceroy and Gover-



nor-General. It is remarked that the sudden appearance of this extraordinary phenomenon at Lucknow on the night of the 5th February had lead the people to suspect that some heavy calamity was to befall India, and lo! while the fear and consternation excited by the portent were yet fresh on their minds, the telegram brought the sorrowful news of the death of Lord Mayo, which overshadowed the world with grief and gloom.

#### EDUCATIONAL.

The *Ab-i-Hayát-i-Hind* of the 15th February praises the Maharana of Oodeypore for taking an active interest in the education of the sons of his chiefs and nobles. A handsome school-house has been erected, in which about three hundred pupils receive instruction in Sanscrit, Persian, and English. The Maharana takes an equal interest in the improvement of dispensaries.





The following Vernacular newspapers have been examined in this report, viz.:—

| No. | NAME OF NEWSPAPER.                            | LANGUAGE.         | LOCALITY.        | WHEN PUBLISHED. | DATE.           | DATE OF RECEIPT.    |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1   | <i>Rohilkhund Literary Society's Journal,</i> | Urdu, ...         | Bareilly, ...    | Monthly, ...    | For Novr. 1871. | 1872.<br>Feby. 19th |
| 2   | <i>Panjábí Akhbár,</i>                        | Ditto, ...        | Lahore, ...      | Weekly, ...     | Jany. 13th      | 27th                |
| 3   | <i>Naiyir-i-Akbar,</i>                        | Ditto, ...        | Bijnour, ...     | Ditto, ...      | " 18th          | 19th                |
| 4   | <i>Ditto,</i>                                 | Ditto, ...        | Ditto, ...       | Ditto, ...      | " 25th          | 22nd                |
| 5   | <i>Gwalior Gazette,</i>                       | Urdu-Hindee, ...  | Gwalior, ...     | Ditto, ...      | Feby. 4th       | 26th                |
| 6   | <i>Supplement to Lawrence Gazette,</i>        | Urdu, ...         | Meerut, ...      | Ditto, ...      | " 1st week      | 27th                |
| 7   | <i>Aina-i-Aib-Numá-i-Hind,</i>                | Ditto, ...        | Lahore, ...      | Ditto, ...      | " 10th          | 28th                |
| 8   | <i>Pattiala Akhbár,</i>                       | Ditto, ...        | Pattiala, ...    | Ditto, ...      | " 12th          | 19th                |
| 9   | <i>Márwár Gazette,</i>                        | Urdu-Hindee, ...  | Jodhpore, ...    | Ditto, ...      | " 12th          | 28th                |
| 10  | <i>Naf-ul-Azim,</i>                           | Arabic, ...       | Lahore, ...      | Ditto, ...      | " 13th          | 19th                |
| 11  | <i>Akbár-i-Am,</i>                            | Urdu, ...         | Ditto, ...       | Ditto, ...      | " 14th          | 19th                |
| 12  | <i>Akmal-ul-Akbár,</i>                        | Ditto, ...        | Delhi, ...       | Ditto, ...      | " 14th          | 20th                |
| 13  | <i>Akbár-i-Alam,</i>                          | Ditto, ...        | Meerut, ...      | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 14  | <i>Benares Akhbár,</i>                        | Hindee, ...       | Benares, ...     | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 15  | <i>Samaya Vinod,</i>                          | Ditto, ...        | Nynce Tal, ...   | Bi-monthly, ... | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 16  | <i>Ab-i-Hayát-i-Hind,</i>                     | Urdu-Hindee, ...  | Agra, ...        | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 17  | <i>Khurshid-i-Jahantáb,</i>                   | Urdu, ...         | Ditto, ...       | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 18  | <i>Mufid-i-Am,</i>                            | Ditto, ...        | Ditto, ...       | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 19th                |
| 19  | <i>Amír-ul-Akbár,</i>                         | Ditto, ...        | Loharoo, ...     | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 25th                |
| 20  | <i>Almorah Akhbár,</i>                        | Urdu-Hindee, ...  | Almorah, ...     | Ditto, ...      | " 15th          | 25th                |
| 21  | <i>Lawrence Gazette,</i>                      | Urdu, ...         | Meerut, ...      | Weekly, ...     | " 16th          | 19th                |
| 22  | <i>Khair Khwaáh-i-Panjáb,</i>                 | Ditto, ...        | Gujranwalla, ... | Ditto, ...      | " 16th          | 19th                |
| 23  | <i>Oudh Akhbár,</i>                           | Ditto, ...        | Lucknow, ...     | Bi-weekly, ...  | " 16th          | 19th                |
| 24  | <i>Urdú Akhbár,</i>                           | Ditto, ...        | Delhi, ...       | Weekly, ...     | " 16th          | 26th                |
| 25  | <i>Jalwá-i-Túr,</i>                           | Ditto, ...        | Meerut, ...      | Ditto, ...      | " 16th          | 20th                |
| 26  | <i>Allygurh Institute Gazette,</i>            | Urdu-English, ... | Allygurh, ...    | Ditto, ...      | " 16th          | 20th                |



| No. | NAME OF NEWSPAPER.                 | LANGUAGE. | LOCALITY... | WHEN PUB-<br>LISHED. | DATE.               | DATE<br>OF RECEIPT. |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 27  | Akhbār-i-Arjuman-i-Panjāb,         | Urdu,     | Lahore,     | Weekly,              | 1872.<br>Feby. 16th | 1872.<br>Feby. 21st |
| 28  | Rajpūtāna Social Science Congress, | Ditto,    | Jaipore,    | Ditto,               | " 16th              | " 29th              |
| 29  | Meerut Gazette,                    | Ditto,    | Meerut,     | Ditto,               | " 17th              | " 19th              |
| 30  | Urdu Delhi Gazette,                | Ditto,    | Agra,       | Ditto,               | " 17th              | " 19th              |
| 31  | Koh-i-Nūr,                         | Ditto,    | Lahore,     | Ditto,               | " 17th              | " 20th              |
| 32  | Panjāb-i-Akhbār,                   | Ditto,    | Ditto,      | Ditto,               | " 17th              | " 21st              |
| 33  | Rohilkhand Akhbār,                 | Ditto,    | Moradabad,  | Ditto,               | " 17th              | " 29th              |
| 34  | Dādabā-i-Sikandarī,                | Ditto,    | Rampore,    | Ditto,               | " 19th              | " 22nd              |
| 35  | Jagat Samāchar,                    | Hindee,   | Meerut,     | Ditto,               | " 19th              | " 23rd              |
| 36  | Karnāmāh,...                       | Urdu,     | Lucknow,    | Ditto,               | " 19th              | " 23rd              |
| 37  | Shola-i-Tūr,                       | Ditto,    | Cawnpore,   | Ditto,               | " 20th              | " 21st              |
| 38  | Muir Gazette,                      | Hindee,   | Meerut,     | Ditto,               | " 20th              | " 22nd              |
| 39  | Oudh Akhbār,                       | Urdu,     | Lucknow,    | Bi-weekly,           | " 20th              | " 22nd              |
| 40  | Naf-ul-Azim,                       | Arabic,   | Lahore,     | Weekly,              | " 20th              | " 23rd              |
| 41  | Molla-i-Nār,                       | Urdu,     | Cawnpore,   | Ditto,               | " 20th              | " 23rd              |
| 42  | Nasim-i-Jounpore,                  | Ditto,    | Jounpore,   | Ditto,               | " 20th              | " 24th              |

ALLAHABAD :

The 23rd March, 1872.

SOHAN LALL,

Offg. Govt. Reporter on the Vernacular Press of Upper India.